

# Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network

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## Background

Obesity, poor nutrition, and diet-related diseases are serious problems for many Minneapolis residents, especially those living in poverty.

Improving access to healthy foods, such as fruits and vegetables, in community settings is an evidence-based strategy that helps increase consumption of healthy foods and leads to reductions in obesity and other chronic diseases. As an increasing number of people turn to hunger relief organizations to help meet their basic needs, it's important that food shelves provide access to healthy food options including fresh produce, whole grains, and low-fat, low-sugar, and low-sodium items.



## Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network

With funding from the Minneapolis Health Department's Statewide Health Improvement Program, the Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network was created to bring food shelves together to discuss and solve shared challenges to providing healthy food options. Members include food shelves and hunger relief organizations committed to increasing the amount of healthy food options available to individuals and families in need. The Network facilitates communication among these partners and encourages collective thinking, problem-solving, and resource sharing.

## Priority Areas

Network members work collectively on three priorities related to increasing healthy food options:

- Connecting to local sources of healthy food (including farmers markets, community gardens, and retail food outlets) and establishing efficient purchasing/donation systems.
- Developing standard communications messages and materials to encourage healthy food donations from a variety of audiences, including individual and organizational donors.
- Increasing client demand for healthy foods through on-site marketing and education.

## Get Involved

For more information, please visit: [www.healthyfoodshelves.org](http://www.healthyfoodshelves.org).

# Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network

Network Goals	Key Activities	Expected Outcomes
Connect food shelves to local sources of healthy food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach to farmers markets and community gardeners</li> <li>• Relationship building with food banks and retail food rescue programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going relationships and efficient purchasing/donation systems established</li> <li>• More availability of healthy options at food shelves</li> </ul>
Develop standard communications messages and materials to encourage healthy food donations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotional materials (brochures, posters, website)</li> <li>• Healthy food donation letter template for organizational and individual donors</li> <li>• Plant an Extra Row campaign materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent use of language to encourage healthy food donations</li> <li>• Standard materials (and modifiable templates for future use)</li> <li>• More donations of healthy foods + fewer donations of unhealthy foods</li> </ul>
Increase client demand for healthy foods through on-site marketing and education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical assistance with food shelf enhancements</li> <li>• On-site marketing materials (healthy food signage, recipe cards, display baskets)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy foods more visible and attractive to clients</li> <li>• Increased client understanding of healthy meal preparation</li> <li>• More clients choosing healthy food options</li> </ul>
Solidify the Network and help it establish credibility/visibility in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular partner meetings</li> <li>• Development and use of Network logo and value statement</li> <li>• Creation of “zones” to encourage collaboration between food shelves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners recognize themselves as part of a network</li> <li>• Community recognizes the Network, its goals, and key messages</li> <li>• Network is recognized as the primary Minneapolis food shelf coalition</li> </ul>
Evaluate impact of current project and plan for expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of changes in healthy food policies and practices at food shelves</li> <li>• Evaluation of changes in amount and quality of healthy foods at food shelves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot projects implemented to address Network priorities</li> <li>• Best/promising practices for increasing healthy food options in food shelves identified</li> </ul>